11/10/77

Mr. Ford Rowan
NBC News
4001 Nebraska Ave., NW
Washington, D.C.

Dear Ford,

Sending you the enclosed record makes me as uneasy as not sending it would. I do not know what is right so I leave it to your judgement. Assuming that after almost 10 years Edgar Franklin Johnston is still around.

I have not studied this teletype. It is some of what to me is garbage I have had forced on me in the FBI's substitution for compliance with my FOIA requests relating to the King assassination now more than eight years old. I know its source and what some of the codes and indications are.

It is a Washington Field Office record from its MURKIN (Murder-King) file. The date represents a period os understandable hysteria. It can also be understood that the FBI searched its indices for straws at which to grasp.This was on the sixth day after the shooting. I have very clear recollections of my own attitudes. I cancelled a scheduled TV appearance fearing that any JFK assassination discussion would be inflamatory and so far as Washington and New York were concerned and all the reporters who knew me I disappeared in New Orleans to pick up my work on Oswald. If it was not on the 10th it was on the 11th that the Garrison office were tipped off by the police that they expected great violence. All the Assistant DAs were carrying pistols.Most of the better Lakefront places at least were closed. I was to have a seafood dinner that night with Moo. (Who was wearing his pistol.) He knew a neighborhood place where the crawfish were great. So I'm not being particularly critical of the FBI is this over-reaching.

My guess is that Johnston was connected with the White Citizens' Councils from the note at the top partly removed in the xeroxing. This along with thousands of others on no other basis a suspect. I take it the second note is his address of that time. The diagonal through his name is an indexing indication. The left-hand of the notes at the bottom is a reference to an earlier record I do not have, the one before this or 20 before that. Next it means they wrote Baltimore and phoned the resident agent after receiving this teletype in Washington, from Baltimore. Silver Spring is under Baltimore, not Washington. I do not know if it is the Silver Spring resident agent or one in Georgia. It could mean after a WFO agent went to NBC. Baltimore knew Washington had a file on Johnston.

In Georgia it appears that no questions about Johnston's beliefs were asked or Baltimore did not include the answers. I have no idea what his belief are or interest in them. That I disagree with the White Citizens' Councils does not lead me to approve domestic intelligence operations against their members or perhaps those who received their mailings. Having read some of the fabrications on me I know how wrong those files can be. If one was disliked they were vicious, malevolent and unanswerable. I was on the WCC mailing list for a while, as could be true of Johnston. But if he was a close buddy of Ned Touchstone the principle is the same to me.

By the way, if you did any checking on Charlie Stein's stories either as leaked by the New Orleans Field Office or as picked up from the Lomax series I'd be interested in any of your recollections.

Best wishes,

Harold Weisberg